
THE
RANDOM HOUSE
DICTIONARY
OF THE
ENGLISH
LANGUAGE

Second Edition

Unabridged

is equivalent to that of the High Mass but that is elaborate in its celebration. Also called **sung Mass**. -05; < LL: lit., sung mass; see **MASS**, **CANTATA**]

al (mis'al), *n.* 1. (sometimes *cap.*) *Rom. Cath. Ch.* book containing the prayers and rites used by the in celebrating Mass over the course of the entire 2. any book of prayers or devotions. [1300-50; < ML *missale*, *n.* use of neut. of *missalis*, equiv. to 1) **MASS** + *-alis* -AL']

al stand', *a*, a lectern for a missal, esp. one on an Also called **altar stand**.

ay (mis sā'), *v.* -said, -say-ing. -*vt.* 1. to say ask ill of; vilify; slander. 2. to say wrongly. -*vi.* speak wrongly or incorrectly. [1175-1225; ME *mis-say*. See **MIS**-, **SAY**'] —**mis-say'er**, *n.*

eem (mis sēm'), *v.* *Archaic.* misbecome. -50; ME *missen*. See **MIS**-, **SEEM**]

el thrush' (mis'al). See **mistle thrush**. [1765-

end (mis send'), *v.* -sent, -send-ing. to send or rd, esp. mail, to a wrong place or person. [1400-50; IE *missenden*. See **MIS**-, **SEND**]

hape (mis shāp', mish-), *v.* -shaped, -shaped ap-en, -shap-ing. to shape badly or wrongly; de- [1400-50; late ME; see **MIS**-, **SHAPE**]

hap-en (mis shā'pən, mish-), *adj.* badly shaped; ned. [1350-1400; ME: ptp. of *misshape*; see **EN**'] -shap-en-ly, *adv.* —**mis-shap-en-ness**, *n.*

ile (mis'al or, esp. *Brit.*, -il), *n.* 1. an object or n for throwing, hurling, or shooting, as a stone, or arrow. 2. See **guided missile**. 3. See **ballis-** -**issile**. -*adj.* 4. capable of being thrown, hurled, t, as from the hand or a gun. 5. used or designed charging missiles. [1600-10; < L, neut. of *missilis*, to miss(us) (ptp. of *mittere* to send, throw) + *-ilis*

le-er (mis'al lēr'), *n.* missileman. [**MISSILE** +

ile gap', a lag in one country's missile produc- relative to the production of another country. 60]

le-man (mis'al man or, esp. *Brit.*, -il-), *n.*, *pl.* 1. a person who builds, designs, launches, or op- guided missiles. 2. a technician or scientist whose pertains to missileery. Also called **missileer**. [1950- SSILE + -MAN]

le-ry (mis'al rē), *n.* the science of the construc- use of guided missiles. Also, **mis'sil-ry**. [1875- SSILE + -RY]

ng (mis'ing), *adj.* lacking, absent, or not found: ing person. [1520-30; **MISS** + *-ING*']

ng link', 1. a hypothetical form of animal as- to have constituted a connecting link between the poid apes and humans, identified by some au- as constituting the genus *Australopithecus*. 2. ing lacking for the completion of a series or se- [1850-55]

ol-o-gy (mis'ē ol'ə jē), *n.* *Christianity.* the thel study of the mission of the church, esp. the char- and purpose of missionary work. [1920-25; **MIS** + *-o-* + *-LOGY*]

on (mish'an), *n.* 1. a group or committee of per- tant to a foreign country to conduct negotiations, sh relations, provide scientific and technical assis- or the like. 2. the business with which such a is charged. 3. a permanent diplomatic establish- broad; embassy; legation. 4. *Mil.* an operational sually assigned by a higher headquarters: a mis- bomb the bridge. 5. *Aerospace.* an operation de- to carry out the goals of a specific program: a mission. 6. a group of persons sent by a church to on religious work, esp. evangelization in foreign and often to establish schools, hospitals, etc. 7. an shment of missionaries in a foreign land; a mis- church or station. 8. a similar establishment in gion. 9. the district assigned to a missionary. 10. ary duty or work. 11. an organization for carry- missionary work. 12. Also called **rescue mis-** shelter operated by a church or other organiza- fering food, lodging, and other assistance to needy s. 13. **missions**, organized missionary work or es in any country or region. 14. a church or a dependent on a larger church or denomination. series of special religious services for increasing as devotion and converting unbelievers: to preach on. 16. an assigned or self-imposed duty or task; vocation. 17. a sending or being sent for some r purpose. 18. those sent. -*adj.* 19. of or per- to a mission. 20. (usually *cap.*) noting or per- to a style of American furniture of the early 20th r, created in supposed imitation of the furnishings Spanish missions of California and characterized use of dark, stained wood, by heaviness, and by e plainness. Also called **foreign mission** (for defs. 1590-1600; 1925-30 for def. 4; < L *mission-* (s. of a sending off, equiv. to *miss(us)* (ptp. of *mittere*) + *-iōn-* -*ION*) —**mis-sion-al**, *adj.*

in (mish'an), *n.* a city in S Texas. 22,589.

in-ar-y (mish'ə ner'ē), *n.*, *pl.* -ar-ies, *adj.* -*n.*

ked', *adj.* se', *v.* -t., -paged, mis-phrase', *v.* -phrased, -phras-ing.

Also, **mis'sion-er**. 1. a person sent by a church into an area to carry on evangelism or other activities, as educa- tional or hospital work. 2. a person strongly in favor of a program, set of principles, etc., who attempts to per- suade or convert others. 3. a person who is sent on a mission. -*adj.* 4. pertaining to or connected with reli- gious missions. 5. engaged in such a mission, or devoted to work connected with missions. 6. reflecting or prompted by the desire to persuade or convert others: the missionary efforts of political fanatics. 7. character- istic of a missionary. [1635-45; < NL *missionarius*. See **MISSION**, -ARY]

mis'sionary apostol/ic, *pl.* missionaries apostolic. *Rom. Cath. Ch.* an honorary title conferred by the pope on certain missionaries.

mis'sionary posi'tion, a position for sexual inter- course in which the couple lies face to face with the male on top. [1965-70; so called because it was allegedly fa- vored by Christian missionaries working among indige- nous peoples, in preference to positions in which the man approaches the woman from behind]

Mis'sionary Ridge', a ridge in NW Georgia and SE Tennessee: Civil War battle 1863.

mis'sion control', *Aerospace.* a command center for the control, monitoring, and support of activities con- nected with manned space flight. Also called **mis'sion control' cen'ter**. [1960-65]

mis-sion-ize (mish'ə niz'), *v.* -ized, -iz-ing. -*vi.* 1. to conduct missionary work. -*vt.* 2. to conduct mis- sionary work in or among. Also, esp. *Brit.*, **mis'sion-ise'**. [1820-30; **MISSION** + *-ize*]

mis'sion spe'cialist, *U.S. Aerospace.* the crew member of a space shuttle who is assigned primary re- sponsibility for carrying out operations related to the payload of the shuttle. [1975-80]

Mis'sion Vie'jo (vē ā'hō), a city in SW California. 50,666.

mis-sis (mis'iz, -is), *n.* 1. *Older Use.* wife: I'll have to ask the missis. 2. the mistress of a household. Also, **missus**. [1780-90; var. of **MISTRESS**]

miss-ish (mis'ish), *adj.* prim; affected; prudish. [1785-95; **MISS** + *-ish*'] —**miss-ish-ness**, *n.*

Mis-sis-sau-ga (mis'ə sō'gə), *n.* a city in SE Ontario, in S Canada, on the SW shore of Lake Ontario: suburb of Toronto. 315,056.

Mis-sis-sip-pi (mis'ə sip'ē), *n.* 1. a state in the S United States. 2,520,638; 47,716 sq. mi. (123,585 sq. km). *Cap.*: Jackson. *Abbr.*: MS (for use with zip code), Miss. 2. a river flowing S from N Minnesota to the Gulf of Mexico: the principal river of the U.S. 2,470 mi. (3,975 km) long; from the headwaters of the Missouri to the Gulf of Mexico 3,988 mi. (6,418 km) long.



Mis-sis-sip-pi-an (mis'ə sip'ē ən), *adj.* 1. of or per- taining to the state of Mississippi or the Mississippi River. 2. *Geol.* noting or pertaining to a period of the Paleozoic Era, occurring from about 345 million to 310 million years ago and characterized as the age of am- phibians. See table under **geologic time**. -*n.* 3. a na- tive or inhabitant of Mississippi. 4. *Geol.* the Mississip- pian Period or System: the former is sometimes considered an epoch of the Carboniferous Period. [1765- 75, *Amer.*; **MISSISSIPPI** + *-AN*]

mis-sive (mis'iv), *n.* 1. a written message; letter. -*adj.* 2. sent or about to be sent, esp. of a letter from an official source. [1400-50; late ME (*letter*) *missive* < ML (*littera*) *missiva* sent (letter), equiv. to L *miss(us)* (ptp. of *mittere* to send) + *-iva*, fem. of *-ivus* -IVE]

Miss' Ju'lie, a play (1888) by Strindberg.

Mis-so-lon-ghi (mis'ə lōng'gē), *n.* a town in W Greece, on the Gulf of Patras: Byron died here 1824. 11,614. Also, **Mesolonghi**.

Mis-sou-la (mi sō'la), *n.* a city in W Montana. 33,388.

Mis-sou-ri (mi sō'rē, -zō'rē), *n.*, *pl.* -sour-is, (esp. collectively) -sour-i for 3. 1. a state in the central United States. 4,917,444; 69,674 sq. mi. (180,455 sq. km).

Cap.: Jefferson City. *Abbr.*: MO (for use with zip code), Mo. 2. a river flowing from SW Montana into the Mis- sissippi N of St. Louis, Mo. 2723 mi. (4382 km) long. 3. a member of a North American Indian tribe belonging to the Siouan linguistic stock, located on the Missouri River in early historic times and now extinct as a tribe. 4. *from Missouri*, *Informal.* unwilling to accept some- thing without proof; skeptical: I'm from Missouri—you'll have to show me that you're right. —**Mis-sour'i-an**, *adj.*, *n.*



Missour'i Cit'y, a city in SE Texas. 24,533.

Missour'i Com'promise, *U.S. Hist.* an act of Con- gress (1820) by which Missouri was admitted as a slave state, Maine as a free state, and slavery was prohibited in the Louisiana Purchase north of latitude 36°30'N, ex- cept for Missouri. Cf. **Kansas-Nebraska Act**.

Missour'i gourd', calabazilla.

Missour'i meer'schaum, corncob (def. 2).

miss-out (mis'out'), *n.* (in the game of craps) a losing throw of the dice. [1925-30; *n.* use of *v.* phrase *miss out*]

mis-speak (mis spēk'), *v.*, *v.t.*, *v.i.* -spoke, -spok-en, -speak-ing. 1. to speak, utter, or pronounce incorrectly. 2. to speak inaccurately, inappropriately, or too hastily. [1150-1200; ME *misspeken*; see **MIS**-, **SPEAK**; cf. OE *missprecan* to murmur]

mis-spell (mis spel'), *v.*, *v.t.*, *v.i.* -spelled or -spelt, -spelling. to spell incorrectly. [1645-55; **MIS** + **SPELL**]

mis-spell-ing (mis spel'ing), *n.* 1. the act of spelling incorrectly: Note his misspelling of that word. 2. an in- correctly spelled word: You have three misspellings in your letter. [1685-95; **MIS** + **SPELLING**]

mis-spend (mis spend'), *v.*, *v.t.* -spent, -spend-ing. to spend wrongly or unwisely; squander; waste. [1350- 1400; ME. See **MIS**-, **SPEND**] —**mis-spend'er**, *n.*

mis-spent (mis spent'), 1. pt. and pp. of **misspend**. -*adj.* 2. spent wrongly or unwisely; wasted: misspent youth.

mis-state (mis stāt'), *v.*, *v.t.* -stat-ed, -stat-ing. to state wrongly or misleadingly; make a wrong statement about. [1640-50; **MIS** + **STATE**] —**mis-state-ment**, *n.* —**mis- stat'er**, *n.*

—*Syn.* misreport, falsify, alter, distort.

mis-step (mis step'), *n.* 1. a wrong step. 2. an error or slip in conduct; faux pas. [1250-1300; ME *missteppen*. See **MIS**-, **STEP**]

—*Syn.* 2. fault, transgression, lapse, indiscretion.

mis-strike (mis strik'), *n.* *Numis.* a coin having the design stamped off center. [1955-60; **MIS** + **STRIKE**]

mis-sus (mis'əz, -əs), *n.* *missis*.

miss-y (mis'ē), *n.*, *pl.* miss-ies. *Informal.* young miss; girl. [1670-80; **MISS** + *-y*']

mist (mist), *n.* 1. a cloudlike aggregation of minute globules of water suspended in the atmosphere at or near the earth's surface, reducing visibility to a lesser degree than fog. 2. a cloud of particles resembling this: She sprayed a mist of perfume onto her handkerchief. 3. something that dims, obscures, or blurs: the mist of igno- rance. 4. a haze before the eyes that dims the vision: a mist of tears. 5. a suspension of a liquid in a gas. 6. a drink of liquor served over cracked ice. 7. a fine spray produced by a vaporizer to add moisture to the air for breathing. -*vi.* 8. to become misty. 9. to rain in very fine drops; drizzle (usually used impersonally with it as subject): It was misting when they went out for lunch. -*v.t.* 10. to make misty. 11. to spray (plants) with a finely diffused jet of water, as a means of replacing lost moisture. [bef. 900; (n.) ME, OE; c. D, LG, Sw *mist*; akin to Gk *omichlē* fog, Russ *mgla* mist, Skt *megha* cloud; (v.) ME *misten*, OE *mistian*, deriv. of the n.] —**mist/less**, *adj.*

—*Syn.* 3, 4. See **cloud**.

mist., (in prescriptions) a mixture. [< L *mistūra*]

mis-tak-a-ble (mi stāk'ə bəl), *adj.* capable of being or liable to be mistaken or misunderstood. [1640-50; **MIS**-

CONCISE PRONUNCIATION KEY: act, cāpe, dāre, pārt; set, ēqual; if, ice; ox, ōver, ōrder, oil, bōok, bōol; out, up, ūrge; child; sing; shoe; thin; that; zh as in treasure, a as in alone, e as in system, i as in easily, o as in gallop, u as in circus; ' as in fire (fīr'), hour (ou'r). l and n can serve as syllabic consonants, as in cradle (krād'l), and button (but'n). See the full key inside the front cover.

mis/pro-pose', *v.* -posed, -pos-ing. **mis/rec-ol-ec'tion**, *n.* **mis/re-fer'**, *v.* -ferred.